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ABSTRACT

Stress is recognized as a problem for both males and females in today's high-technology society. However, research comparing men and women in the workplace has shown that females typically experience higher levels of stress on the job than males experience. This study attempted to compare male and female levels and areas of work-related stress in selected occupations and to establish norms of stress in these professions on the Tennessee Stress Scale-R (TSS-R). The TSS-R was administered to professionals (N=520) in the areas of education, medical, government service, and business. Females scored higher than males on producers, copers, and symptoms subscales. Education professionals scored significantly higher than business and government service professionals on producers and symptoms subscales. There was a significant negative correlation between age and coping. Regional differences emerged with scores in the Western region of the country being significantly lower than those in the East. Further research is underway with the TSS-R. Additional results of this and other studies will be forthcoming, including studies of specific job-related stressors reported by women and men and ways in which both sexes cope. (ABL)

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A. Title: A Comparison of Work-Related Stress for Males and Females

B. Area: Stress/Health Psychology

C. THE PROBLEM: Stress is recognized as a problem for both males and females in today's high-tech society. However, research (Greenglass, 1988, McWilliams, 1988, McWilliams and Schnorr, 1988) comparing men and women in the workplace has shown that females typically experience higher levels of stress on the job than males experience.

Characteristics of women's work such as low pay, sex segregation, job typecast as male or female (Gutek & Monarch, 1982, Konrad & Gutek, 1987) and the nature of short career ladders tend to give added stress to women.

Within the past ten years, more and more women have been entering non-traditional male dominated careers and have been moving into the executive/managerial rank. A comparison of female and male experienced stress could prove helpful in identifying specific work-related stressors and in teaching effective coping strategies to women and men.

Even though stress is generally considered to be a problem today, little has been done to identify specific stress

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producers, coping mechanisms and symptoms. McWilliams developed the 60-item Tennessee Stress Scale-R (TSS-R) with this in mind. The present study uses the TSS-R as a measure of work-related stress.

The purpose of this study was (1) to compare male and female levels and areas of work-related stress in selected occupations, and (2) to establish norms of stress in these professions on the Tennessee Stress Scale-R.

D. PROCEDURE: The Tennessee Stress Scale-R (TSS-R) by McWilliams was administered to the following groups of professionals (n=520): (1) Education, (2) Medical, (3) Government Service, and (4) Business. Demographic data was included to analyze (1) regional or geographical differences, and (2) age.

Means and standard deviations are reported in Tables 1 and 2.

E. RESULTS: Females scored higher than males on producers, copers and symptoms (Table 1). Education professionals scored significantly higher than Business and Government Service on producers and symptoms subscales (Table 2). There was a significant negative correlation (p. 05) between age and coping. Regional diffeences emerged with scores in the Western region of the country being significantly lower than Easterners (p. 05).

F. CONCLUSIONS: The findings of all the research reported here were similar. More research is underway with the TSS-R. Additional results of this and other studies will be forthcoming

in the literature including specific job-related stressors reported by women and men and ways in which both sexes cope. The authors encourage anyone interested in using the TSS-R for research or clinical purposes to contact them.

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TABLE 1

Population Means and Standard Deviations by Sex for TSS-R

	Males (n=131)		Females (n=389)		Total	
	X	S	X	S	X	S
Producers	7.538	3.330	8.524	3.690	8.282	3.626
Copers	7.569	3.477	8.211	3.454	8.071	3.479
Symptoms	6.527	3.558	8.298	3.637	7.858	3.727
Total	21.359	8.326	24.797	8.420	23.964	8.562

All gender differences are significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 2

TSS-R Means and Standard Deviations for Selected Professionals

	Producers		Copers		Symptoms		Total	
	X	S	X	S	X	S	X	S
Business (n=15)	7.867	4.422	7.133	3.441	7.933	4.818	22.933	9.684
Education (n=289)	8.471	3.713	8.215	3.528	8.130	3.672	24.514	8.658
Government (n=52)	7.596	3.967	7.827	3.079	7.039	3.660	22.365	8.568
Medical n=69)	8.304	3.790	8.420	3.821	7.471	3.830	23.797	8.220
Other (n=10)	7.889	2.578	7.822	3.486	7.333	3.649	23.044	6.971